Collaboration in color...

This week, Coe staff and members of the Board of Directors got together to add a little color to our new project space located right in front of our main building. We are so thrilled to have gathered to mark our beginning moments of
activating this new, wonderfully blank slate of a space. As our first action, we thought it would be perfect to bring a little of the Coe outside. Anyone who has visited the Coe in person is familiar with the Calvin Hunt (Kwakwaka’wakw) Hams’pek Pole that presides over our space. This stunning pole was the inspiration for the Coe Center’s logo. The logo, a stylized and simplified image of the four openings of the pole, now graces the front wall of our space in the former Consolidated Electric building on Pacheco Street here in Santa Fe.

The process of painting our logo and name on the building goes far beyond simple signage—it was an act of hands-on collaboration between staff, directors of the board, and family members. Will Wilson (Diné) generously volunteered to stencil the outlines in a late-night projection adventure fending off giant mosquitoes while doing so. With the prep completed, Will, Kenneth Johnson (Muscogee/Seminole), Vanessa Elmore, Gerald Stiebel, and the Coe staff—Rachel Wixom, Samantha Tracy (Diné), and Bess Murphy—all convened with donuts, burritos, lots of paint, and a great willingness to get our hands dirty. Choosing to paint the space ourselves rather than outsourcing the action is about rooting the space in who we are and how we view the Coe.

There are not too many large, empty warehouse spaces in Santa Fe. When Consolidated Electric moved out, the opportunity presented itself for the Coe to begin dreaming of a campus and project space where we can do even more programming with our collection, artists, community members, and you. Join us on August 19th for our next step in that direction!

Goggles, a project space, and a snow machine?
In our last issue of *The Virtual Coe*, we shared how one of our Hands-On student curators engaged with our two pairs of Alaskan snow goggles. The story of these goggles continues into the project space. A few months ago, we were honored to work with photographer Cara Romero.
(Chemehuevi) for a photo shoot that she staged in the Coe's project space. The shoot was a collaboration between Romero, the artist and recent IAIA alum Golga Oscar (Yup'ik), and works from the Coe collection. For the shoot, Cara and Golga created a powerful scene of Yup'ik cultural identity within the Coe space—snow machine and all. We were particularly thrilled to be able to have pieces from our collection present in the conversation that took place between artists and communities.

The image above, entitled “Golga”, includes the Coe’s c. 1875 pair of Yup'ik snow goggles. In addition to the goggles, Golga is wearing his own handmade pieces. Golga's work focuses on creating a sustainable, ongoing dialogue with Yup’ik artistry, past, present, and future. Romero's photography does a similar kind of work—centering Native peoples as not just subjects in images, but as vocal collaborators, actors, and agitators. We look forward to continuing to work with Cara in honoring the voices of our pieces and the stories that she so profoundly tells through her imagery.

Middle: Artist Unknown (Yup'ik), Snow Goggles, c. 1875. Wood and natural fiber string, 1.375 x 5.125 in. (3.4 x 13 cm). NA0619
Bottom: Coe Center project space.

To view past The Virtual Coe issues, please click here.